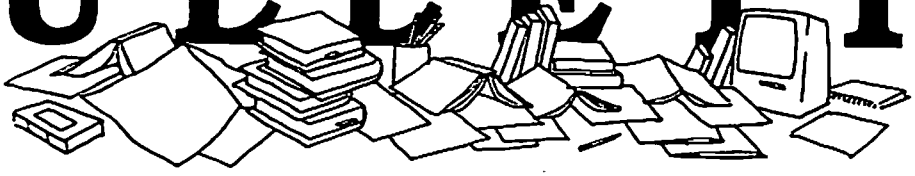
THE LITERACY MATERIALS

BULLETIN



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Fall1995

• instructors • tutors • learners • administrators • coordinators • librarians • resource centres • learning centres •

In January 1989 Gwen Armstrong, of what was then called the B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training, brought together a group of people from across British Columbia who were interested in sharing information about materials for adult literacy learners. From that gathering emerged the Literacy Materials Committee. A year later, with funding from the Ministry and the Secretary of State, the committee published its first *Literacy Materials Bulletin*. I was fortunate to be part of that original group and at the next meeting Lorraine Fox from the Native Tutoring Centre joined us. After this, our twelfth *Bulletin,* Lorraine and I will be stepping down from the committee. Over the past six years Lorraine has spent innumerable hours field testing materials, writing reviews and participating in meetings. We have all benefited from her wise and thoughtful perspective. Serving on the Literacy Materials Committee has been a delightful and challenging experience for me. I have learned a great deal from the dedicated, talented people with whom I have worked over the years. I have made friends I will keep forever.

We are pleased Helen Thomas has agreed to take over as chair of the Literacy Materials Committee and as publisher of the *Bulletin*. We also welcome Lorrie Lane, our first member from East Kootenay Community College. We would like to encourage others in B.C. who work with adult learners at the Fundamental Level and who have a burning interest in literacy materials to think about joining the committee. Just send a short note to the address on the back page of this *Bulletin* and when a seat on the committee becomes vacant you may be contacted. The committee wants to involve people from as many different literacy organizations as possible in order to have a broad representation. A special thanks from all of us to those readers who have taken the time to offer their suggestions, support and encouragement this year and in the past.

In each *Bulletin* we endeavour to review a wide variety of literacy materials. This issue contains writing, spelling, math, science, history and general reading materials. We hope this assortment includes something of interest to you and your students.

Laurie Gould

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Title:	Unscrambling Spelling
Author:	Cynthia Klein and Robin R. Millar
Publisher:	Hodder & Stoughton, 1990
Available:	Canbook Distribution Services 1220 Nicholson Road, Newmarket ON, L3Y 7V1, (905) 713-3852, 1-800-399-6858 fax 1-800-363-2665
Price:	$49.95
ISBN:	0-340-51234-2
Reviewer:	Helen Thomas

Unscrambling Spelling

Unscrambling Spelling is full of ideas for teaching spelling and helping students understand more about learning strategies and spelling. It even includes 17 reproducible masters that can be used with students.

This book suggests adults must see a reason for improving their spelling, believe they can improve their spelling, analyze their errors and past spelling history, determine their learning style, discover the strategies that work for them and practice using, "The Look, Cover, Write, Check Method." The authors also feel it is essential that the students' spelling lists come from their writing and that they are using the words in further writing. It is a philosophy that "empowers students to understand the nature of spelling errors."

Discussing ways to remember how to spell words is part of the approach followed in Unscrambling Spelling. One of the most useful chapters for me was *Talking About Spelling*. This chapter explores the myths of spelling. Being able to question our attitudes and mind sets is an important first step for learning. Many useful ways of encouraging students to think of themselves as learners are in *Learning Styles and Preferences*. Many practical ideas for learning how to spell words correctly are in *Specific Strategies*.

Some of the resource sheets are beyond the Fundamental Level, but could be adapted for other students. Another instructor found that the dictation on page 27 was too difficult for Fundamental Level students. However, she liked the idea of analyzing errors to see what can be done to improve them and pointed out that there is an alternative source given for other dictations at different levels. There is also an excellent bibliography and suggestions throughout the book for where to turn for more information.

Unscrambling Spelling is a logical and worthwhile way to teach spelling. I recommend this excellent book to classroom teachers, tutor coordinators and tutors.

Sample Page

Finding the Rule

1 What rule can you make about adding suffixes (endings) to words from the following examples?

drop	dropped	dropping	dropper	
hug	hugged	hugging		
stop	stopped	stopping	stopper	
put		putting		
win		winning	winner	
stir	stirred	stirring		stirrup
hid	hidden			
red	redden		redder	reddest
sun	sunny			
mum	mummy			

2 What rule can you make about adding the suffix '-ing' to words from the following examples?

bake	baking	BUT	**see**	seeing
have	having		**flee**	fleeing
paste	pasting		**agree**	agreeing
bite	biting			
choose	choosing			
explode	exploding			
whistle	whistling			
trouble	troubling			
illuminate	illuminating			
recognise	recognising			

3 What rule can you make from the following examples?

all	always	**full**	hopeful
	also		careful
	almost		helpful
	altogether		grateful
	already		wonderful
	(Note: all right)		

Title:	Threshold: Cambridge Pre-GED Program in Science
Author:	Donna Stelluto
Publisher:	Cambridge Adult Education, 1992
Available:	Prentice Hall, 1870 Birchmount Rd., Scarborough ON, M1P 2J7, 1-800-567-3800 fax 1-800-563-9196
Price:	$10.36
ISBN:	0-13-116419-8
Level:	independent
Reviewer:	Katie Molloy

Threshold
Cambridge Pre–Ged Program in Science

Although the Threshold Cambridge Pre-GED Program in Science is a science text book, I am recommending it for use as a comprehension text in the Fundamental Level English program because it emphasizes reading comprehension skills and is written at a 6.0 – 8.0 reading level.

This text is divided into four units covering the main areas of comprehension: general reading comprehension skills, inference, application of information, and analysis and evaluation of what was read. Unit 1 has six chapters covering prereading skills, structural analysis, finding details and main idea, patterns of organization and reading tables and graphs. There are two chapters in Unit 2 dealing with inferences and implied main Idea. Unit 3 has one chapter on applying information about categories, applying information from passages, and applying information from graphics. The final unit has chapters on relevant and irrelevant information, facts and opinions, and conclusions and supporting information.

Students can learn good sound study habits through the lay-out of this text. It provides simply stated overviews for each unit highlighting the objectives. The step by step "How To" sections and the "Try This" practice sections are distinctly marked and strategically placed throughout the text promoting active participation in an organized and systematic way. The "Answers and Explanations" section at the end is cross-referenced and very useful.

This text can be used across the curriculum. For example, *Chapter 6: Reading Tables and Graphs* offers excellent supplementary information for Fundamental Level math students.

Although it is written at the Fundamental reading level, I would not recommend this book for a self paced setting. Much of the information would be new for many students and may need clarification.

For many years I have been looking for a comprehension resource with scientific content to better prepare students continuing on to the Intermediate level. I strongly recommend Threshold Cambridge Pre-GED Program in Science as I believe it will give these students a very good grounding in the comprehension skills needed to succeed, not only in science, but across the curriculum.

Lesson 18

Sample Page

Reading Circle Graphs

Circle graphs are named for their shape. They are also called pie charts. The circle represents the whole of something, that is, 100%. The parts of the circle represent the parts, or percentages, of the whole.

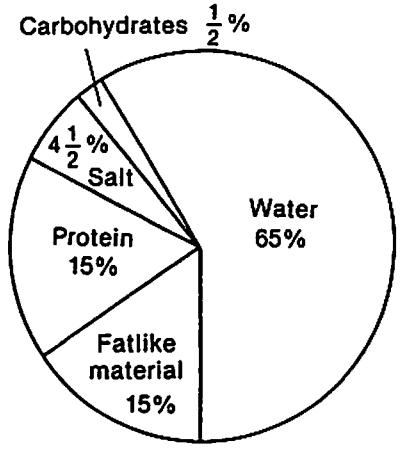
Scientists use circle graphs when they want to show what portion of a whole thing one part is. When reading a circle graph, you can easily make comparisons between the parts. There are three steps in reading a circle graph.

How to Read a Circle Graph

STEP 1: **Read the title.**
STEP 2: **Read the labels on the parts of the circle graph.**
STEP 3: **Read the circle graph to find details.**

The following example applies these three steps to this circle graph.

WHAT A TYPICAL CELL IN THE HUMAN BODY IS MADE OF



STEP 1: **Read the title.**

The title of a circle graph lets you know what the circle represents. The title is *What a Typical Cell in the Human Body Is Made Of.* This tells you that the circle represents a cell in the human body.

STEP 2: **Read the labels on the parts of the circle graph.**

The purpose of this step is to give you a quick overview of the circle graph. It is divided into five parts. The five parts represent the five substances that make up most cells in the human body. When you add the percentages of all five parts, they total 100%.

STEP 3: **Read the circle graph to find details.**

There are many details on the graph. For example, the largest

Title:	Breakthrough to Math
Publisher:	New Readers Press, 1978
Available:	Artel Educational Resources Ltd. 5528 Kingsway, Burnaby BC, V5H 2G2, 1-800-665-9255, fax 435-1955 or Laubach Literacy of Canada, 70 Crown St. Suite 225 St. John NB, E2L 2X6, (506) 634-1980, fax (506) 634-0944
Price:	$7.25 for each book, $8.25 for Teacher's Guides
Level:	basic/functional
Reviewer:	Joyce Vowles

★★ Breakthrough To Math ★★

Level 1: Basic Skills with Whole Numbers
- Bk. 1 Understanding Numbers (810)
- Bk. 2 Adding Whole Numbers (811)
- Bk. 3 Subtracting Whole Numbers (812)
- Bk. 4 Multiplying Whole Numbers (813)
- Bk. 5 Dividing Whole Numbers (814)
- Bk. 6 Word Problems with Whole.... (815)
- Workbook for Level 1 (808)
- Teacher's Guide for Level One (807)

Level 2: Fractions, Decimals and Percents
- Bk. 1 Understanding and Comparing Fractions (820)
- Bk. 2 Adding and Subtracting Fractions (821)
- Bk. 3 Multiplying &Dividing Fractions (822)
- Bk. 4 Decimal Fractions (823)
- Bk. 5 Percents (824)
- Bk. 6 Word Problems and Fractions, Decimals and Percents (825)
- Workbook for Level 2 (829)
- Teacher's Guide for Level Two (827)

The Breakthrough to Math series includes *Level 3: Algebra* and *Level 4: Geometry*. Both are written at about a grade 5 level but include concepts that are beyond the Fundamental Level. Supplementary materials for each level are also available, including a Placement Inventory, Mastery Checkup, Student Profile Sheets and Teacher's Directory. These materials were not field tested for this review.

In Breakthrough to Math the rationale for learning each concept is explained in simple, accessible form. Adults are shown using math skills in real life situations, such as modifying a recipe or cutting boards. Instructions and explanations are written in clear, conversational language, accessible to even a beginning reader. Important vocabulary words are bolded to stand out and use as a matter of course. There are a number of examples to show the steps involved in an operation, plus clearly laid out exercises with plenty of space for figuring and for clarity. Each section exercise includes 7 to 8 questions. Solutions are provided on coloured paper at the end of each section, and include the steps involved in solving the problems, rather than simply the answers.

The post-test at the end of the book includes a key which instructs students to review particular pages related to questions missed. Extra practice is provided in the *Workbooks* for each level.

Breakthrough to Math is perhaps best used as an introduction to a concept or in remedial work. Students reported that the explanations and exercises were very useful in clearing up problems when they had tried most everything else.

★★★★ GOLDEN OLDIE ★★★★

8. Adding more than two 3- and 4-place numbers

Sometimes you need to add more than two 3-place numbers.
Suppose you need to add 321 and 245 and 132.
Keep the places in columns.
First, add the ones, two numbers at a time.

$$\begin{array}{r} 321 \\ 245 \\ +\ 132 \\ \hline 8 \end{array} \qquad \begin{array}{r} 1 \\ 5 \\ 2 \end{array} \overset{\overset{6}{\frown}}{\frown} 8$$

Then add the tens, two numbers at a time.

$$\begin{array}{r} 321 \\ 245 \\ +\ 132 \\ \hline 98 \end{array} \qquad \begin{array}{r} 2 \\ 4 \\ 3 \end{array} \overset{\overset{6}{\frown}}{\frown} 9$$

Then add the hundreds, two numbers at a time.

$$\begin{array}{r} 321 \\ 245 \\ +\ 132 \\ \hline 698 \end{array} \qquad \begin{array}{r} 3 \\ 2 \\ 1 \end{array} \overset{\overset{5}{\frown}}{\frown} 6$$

So, 321 + 245 + 132 = 698

Title:	Midnight Reading Series
Publisher:	Educational Developmental Laboratories, Inc., 1990
Available:	Artel Educational Resources Ltd., 5528 Kingsway, Burnaby BC V5H 2G2, 1-800-665-9255, fax 435-1955
Price:	$6.00 ea. $37.75 for reproducible comprehension sheets
Order No.	319486 to 319498
Level:	basic/functional
Reviewer:	Laurie Gould

Midnight Reading Series

Here is a set of high interest, original fiction stories to add to your collection. The Midnight Reading Series consists of 12 small books written especially for adults and high school students with reading levels between 1.5 - 4.5. The series contains three books in each of four categories: *Sports Mystery, Detective, Adventure, Thriller*. The books are all about 46 pages long but the stories vary in length to accomodate different reading levels; *AA books* contain three stories, *BA books* contain two longer stories and *CA books* contain one complete novelette.

The books can be purchased individually or in complete library sets that contain 5 or 10 copies of each title. Also available is a set of reproducible comprehension sheets for the entire series. The comprehension sheets were not field tested for this review.

The bookcovers have intriguing real life photographs which, as these comments attest, attract attention and entice students to read.

"It looked interesting and it was."

"The man on the cover looked like Stallone."

"I chose this book because the cover caught my eye."

Unlike some 'easy readers', the writing in these stories is quite natural and fluid; the dialogues sound real. Students find the stories relevant and interesting.

"I liked this book from start to finish. It had lots of action. It caught my attention right at the start and kept me thinking."

"It goes to show what some people will do to get what they want. I think this book is real life. It goes on all the time. Bribes."

Negative comments from students were infrequent and fairly innocuous.

"Not long enough."

"Slow at the beginning and then got more interesting."

"Some of the words got me but I spelled them out and got them."

The Midnight Readers have been in our classroom book box for a year now. Because a few of the books have characters who are just out of high school, and the stories are all set in the U.S., I thought my adult students might be put off. However, none of these issues proved to be problematic and the more popular titles listed below are getting quite dog-eared: *Head of the Family , Volunteer Bullet, Exit for Two, On the Run, Dear Long Lost Monica.* I think your students will enjoy these stories.

Sample Page

looked ill. "Mr. Cash," she said, "I our help."

ybe I can help," I said. "Sit down nd tell me your story."

I watched as she moved across the room. In a way, I was afraid I could not help. People buy my help. And Mrs. Pipes didn't look as if she had any money to use for a private eye. "Go on," I said. "I'll stop you if I think you forgot something."

She didn't have a long story to tell. It was about her son Bill. He had been out of school for two years. Most of that time, he had been on the streets with other dropouts.

A GAME FOR CASH

BY

GLEN HARLAN

Some had trouble with the police. Others had trouble with drugs. Her son had stayed clean—she thought. He had a job. He was working at Harry Hides' Shirt Shop.

"Is he a salesman?" I asked.

He wasn't a salesman. I had not thought so. Dropouts don't get jobs like that very often. His job was to keep the store clean. The other thing he had to do was get more shirts from the back room when they were needed. He liked the job. And he had told his mother that it was easy.

Bill had been on the job for two weeks before the trouble started. Then he came home with a new shirt. His mother had asked him about it. He would not tell how he got the shirt. But he did tell his mother not to worry about it. A week went by. Then he came home with another new shirt. Again, he told his mother not to worry. But she could see he was not happy about the shirt. That was why she had come to see me.

"Do you think the people at the store gave him the shirts?" I asked Mrs. Pipes.

"I know they didn't give him the shirts," she said. "And you know it, too. People don't give away shirts to someone who just started working for them."

Title:	In This Country . . . Personal Stories About Northern B.C.
Editor:	Bill Graham
Publisher:	B.C. Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour and the National Literacy Secretariat, 1994
Available:	Bill Graham, College of New Caledonia, Box 5000, Burns Lake, B.C. V0J 1E0 (604) 692-1700
Price:	free as long as quantities last
ISBN:	1-895665-06-X
Level:	functional/independent
Reviewer:	Lorraine Fox

In This Country . . . Personal Stories About Northern B.C.

In This Country is a collection of personal stories written by learners who are enrolled in adult education programs in northern British Columbia. The writers are attending programs from the literacy level to Grade 12 equivalency and must be congratulated for agreeing to be involved in this project. The stories were compiled and edited by Bill Graham, an instructor at the College of New Caledonia, Burns Lake.

The stories offer a wide range of experiences and very personal glimpses into the lives of these courageous northern people. A student reader remarked, "I like this book because it has short stories and the authors are adults who are in a literacy education school. It has their own stories and experience in life, at the end it tells us about them which I really like because we got to know a little about them."

The stories are grouped by theme into seven chapters: *Northern Childhood, Transitions, Parents & Children, Northern Humour, Lifestyles, The Bush, Winter.* Within each chapter stories with linked ideas are grouped together so they can be used for discussions in a classroom setting.

The stories offer an excellent starting point for the first time writer and are very useful in helping learners over the writing hurdle. Students are motivated to write their own stories when they read these attractively presented tales. "This is quite interesting to see just the same people as us writing little stories. Being from the northern part of BC this was good because reading some of these stories reminds me of when I was a little girl and older where I am from. This also gives me some ideas to write my own stories which I know a few to tell about. This is a good way to make us more interested in what we write in our classrooms. This is something I would like to try."

Familiar place names, events and customs of the north can be used as teaching aides and supplements to existing curriculum. "The stories teach how the people live in Northern BC. All people have something to talk about in their life." "I enjoyed the true vivid details with a combination of happy and sad."

The title of the book comes from the way persons living in this area often begin conversations with the phrase, "In this country. . ." Their ideas, interests and concerns reflect a very different life than that of their southern cousins. The reader is reminded that we live in a country of diverse customs, religions and cultural groups and we are fortunate to live in Canada where this is possible.

The bush

Happy Times

By Michael Johnny

When I was about four or five years old, I lived in a village called Blue River, near the Yukon border in B.C. It was a very small village of about 50 people. This was the home of our Indian reservation, called Kaska Dena. I visited the village every summer because it was the home of my grandparents.

One nice, bright, sunny day in the summer, my grandma and grandpa took me for a leisurely walk to the green forests behind our reservation. We walked on the dirt road looking for berries to pick. My grandma had a large pail and grandpa had his big rifle in case we saw a deer, moose, or rabbit to hunt. Everywhere we looked on the sides of the road we saw lots of blackberries. Grandma wanted blackberries to make jam and we needed soapberries to make Indian ice cream. I helped them gather berries, but I didn't put the berries in the pail. All I did was put them in my mouth. That's what all kids do. When I got bored with picking berries, I sauntered down the road to look at the wild flowers and the insects flitting about. That's when I saw butterflies all over the small bushes in the centre of the dirt road. I ran and stared at them. I caught one of the purple butterflies. It was in my hands. I ran to show it to my grandparents. I yelled at them, "Grandpa, Grandma, look!" They looked. I put my hand right in their faces and opened it. As I did so, the butterfly flew away.

My grandparents smiled at me and said, "It's good to let the butterfly go free." I was so happy, I ran to get another one. This was a happy memory I will never forget.

Michael Johnny likes drawing, painting, horseback riding, fishing, and skiing. He wrote Happy Times while attending an adult education program at the Nechako Learning Centre in Vanderhoof. He is single and hopes to work with his band in the future.

Title:	The Steck-Vaughn Comprehension Skills Series, 1992
Authors:	Linda Ward Beech, Tara McCarthy, Donna Townsend
Publisher:	Steck-Vaughn.
Available:	Canbook Distribution Services 1220 Nicholson Road, Newmarket ON, L3Y 7V1, (905) 713-3852, 1-800-399-6858 fax 1-800-363-2665
Price:	$245
ISBN:	0-8114-78726
Level:	basic/functional
Reviewer:	Katie Molloy

Steck-Vaughn Comprehension Skills Series

The Steck-Vaughn Comprehension Skills Series helps students become better readers. There are thirty booklets in all. Each booklet contains high-interest reading selections that cover a wide range of subjects from science, social studies, history, sports and the arts. This variety holds the interest of adult readers. The reading selections are short and contain a strictly controlled vocabulary.

Each of the six key comprehension skills *Facts, Main Idea, Sequence, Context, Conclusion* and *Inference* are developed in five booklets, levels B through F, accommodating students working at second through a sixth-grade reading level. Instructors who field tested the booklets generally used them in individualized settings but one instructor used some of the titles in the series as part of class directed lessons and remarked that, "The one on *Inference* was very successful."

Each booklet follows a similar format beginning with an *Introduction* which provides a visual clue helping students focus on the skill being covered. *Sample Questions* come next acquainting students with the type of exercises in the book. Many helpful hints as well as simple directions are provided in the *How To Use This Book* section. For students requiring more of a challenge, there is a section with many good suggestions. The main body of the booklets, Units 1 through 25, consist of short fiction and non-fiction reading selections followed by easy-to-follow comprehension exercises. The *Check Yourself* section provides the student with a perforated, easy to use answer key. This section allows students to evaluate their own work. Students can build critical-thinking skills through a variety of different activities found in the *Think and Apply* sections.

There is little Canadian content within the series; however, the material is appealing to adult learners and is free of bias. Because each skill is covered in isolation, students requiring extra help with a specific skill will find lots of practice within the focused exercises. I have found this series to be an invaluable addition to the classroom. I recommend it as a supplement to any comprehension course at the Fundamental Level.

Sample Page

UNIT 19

1. Frank studied his son. He wondered what he could say to convince the boy not to take the job. Frank knew the job seemed wonderful to a boy in high school. How could he explain to his son that it was more important to wait one more year?

2. Clare ran her finger down the first column on the page. "No, no, no," she repeated over and over. Suddenly her finger stopped on one of the little boxes. "Two rooms with a large kitchen," she read. Then she circled the box of print with her pen.

3. David sat with his hands clenching the armrests. The woman in the aisle said, "Please fasten your seat belts." David fumbled with the belt. The woman then made sure all the seats were in an upright position. She finished just as the engines began to roar on either side of David.

4. The woman happily bounced her grandson on her lap. The baby looked puzzled at first, and then he began to smile. "You had that same little smile when you were his age," the woman said to the man. "I thought I never smiled at that age," the boy's father replied.

Score ◇

_____ 1. From this you can tell that the son probably

A. needs a job very badly
B. has one more year to go to finish high school
C. has been looking for a job for a long time
D. doesn't make good grades in high school

_____ 2. You know from the story that Clare is

A. looking in the newspaper for an apartment
B. studying the outside of an old building
C. reading a story in the newspaper

Title:	It Takes Two To Talk: A Parent's Guide to Helping Children Communicate
Author:	Ayala Manolson
Publisher:	The Hanen Centre, 1992
Available:	Douglas College Bookstore P.O. Box 2503, New Westminster, BC, V2L 5B2, (604) 527-5012 fax (604) 527-5213 or The Hanen Centre, 252 Bloor Street West, Rm. 390 Toronto, ON M5S 1V5, (416) 921-1073 fax (416) 921-1225
Price:	$25
ISBN:	0-921145-02-0
Level:	independent
Reviewer:	Iris Strong

It Takes Two To Talk

It Takes Two To Talk is NOT a book which will appeal to every adult literacy student; it *is* one that mothers of young children seem to LOVE! This book presents an approach to overcoming many of the barriers to good communication with children such as their limited ability to communicate, negative emotions, perceived lack of power, and skepticism about the benefits of communicating. It is based on the Hanen Approach, the essence of which is to encourage communication through indirect action by going around the child's resistance. The book focuses on caring connections that are summed up in the *3a Way:*

allow the child to lead

adapt to "share the moment"

add language and experience

It Takes Two To Talk uses the *3a Way* in a variety of settings, featuring games, music, books and art, and parents are always encouraged to remember *OWL: O*bserve, *W*ait and *L*isten. In order to keep track of a child's progress in communicating, there is a detailed developmental checklist at the back of the book.

This eye-catching publication has an attractive turquoise cover with an appealing sketch of mother and child engaging in happy communication. Locating information is made easy by the table of contents which clearly labels each of the eight chapter topics, and by the index at the end, which describes each chapter in detail. There are excellent graphics and cartoons throughout, which illustrate and enhance the lively, practical suggestions. White space and variety of print size and type are used effectively and make for comfortable reading and quick reference to ideas.

Because this book proved so popular with the young parents in my classroom, it was difficult for me to get a turn using it in order to write the review. Some learners, who had never read a book before, were found enthusiastically reading in every spare moment. People who had hardly spoken to each other before, suddenly had a reason to engage in animated conversation about this book and their children. Student comments include: "This book has some great ideas!" "I Wish I had read this when my kids were younger." "Every parent should read this book!" "I love it!" "May I have it after you?"

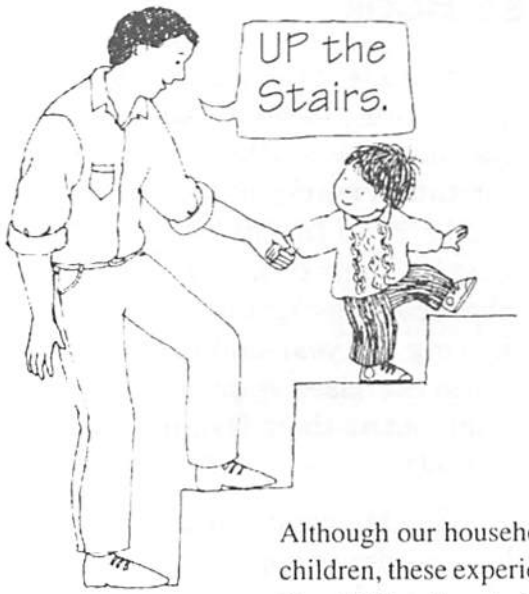
Sample Page

When To Add Language and Experience

1. In the give and take of daily routines — we can add information

We share a lot of moments with our children during the ordinary routines of daily living.

When we're with our children and we describe what is happening, we give them the words they need to understand and, later, to use language. Daily activities provide a prime time for learning because our children can hear the same words repeated over and over again in these familiar situations:



- going up and down stairs
- waking up
- getting the diaper changed
- going to the bathroom
- brushing teeth
- combing hair
- getting dressed
- mealtime and snack time
- putting on hats and coats to go out
- picking up toys
- having a bath
- getting ready for bed

Although our household chores may take longer to do when we involve our children, these experiences enrich their opportunities to understand and learn. Our children love being with us, and they can learn so much when:

- setting the table
- preparing a meal
- baking a cake, pie, muffins
- unloading the dryer
- buying groceries
- putting away groceries
- opening mail
- shovelling snow
- raking leaves
- washing the car
- washing dishes
- making beds
- getting into the car (seatbelts, car seat)
- locking and unlocking the door
- turning lights on and off

Title:	The Wordless Book
Publisher:	National Literacy Secretariat and the Employment Group of Human Resources Development Canada, 1994
Available:	National Literacy Secretariat Human Resources Develop, 25 Eddy Street, Hull, Que. K1A 1K5, (819) 953-5280, fax (819) 953-8076
Price:	free
ISBN:	0-662060256-0
Order No:	MP43-310/1994
Level:	all
Reviewer:	Jan Sawyer

The Wordless Book

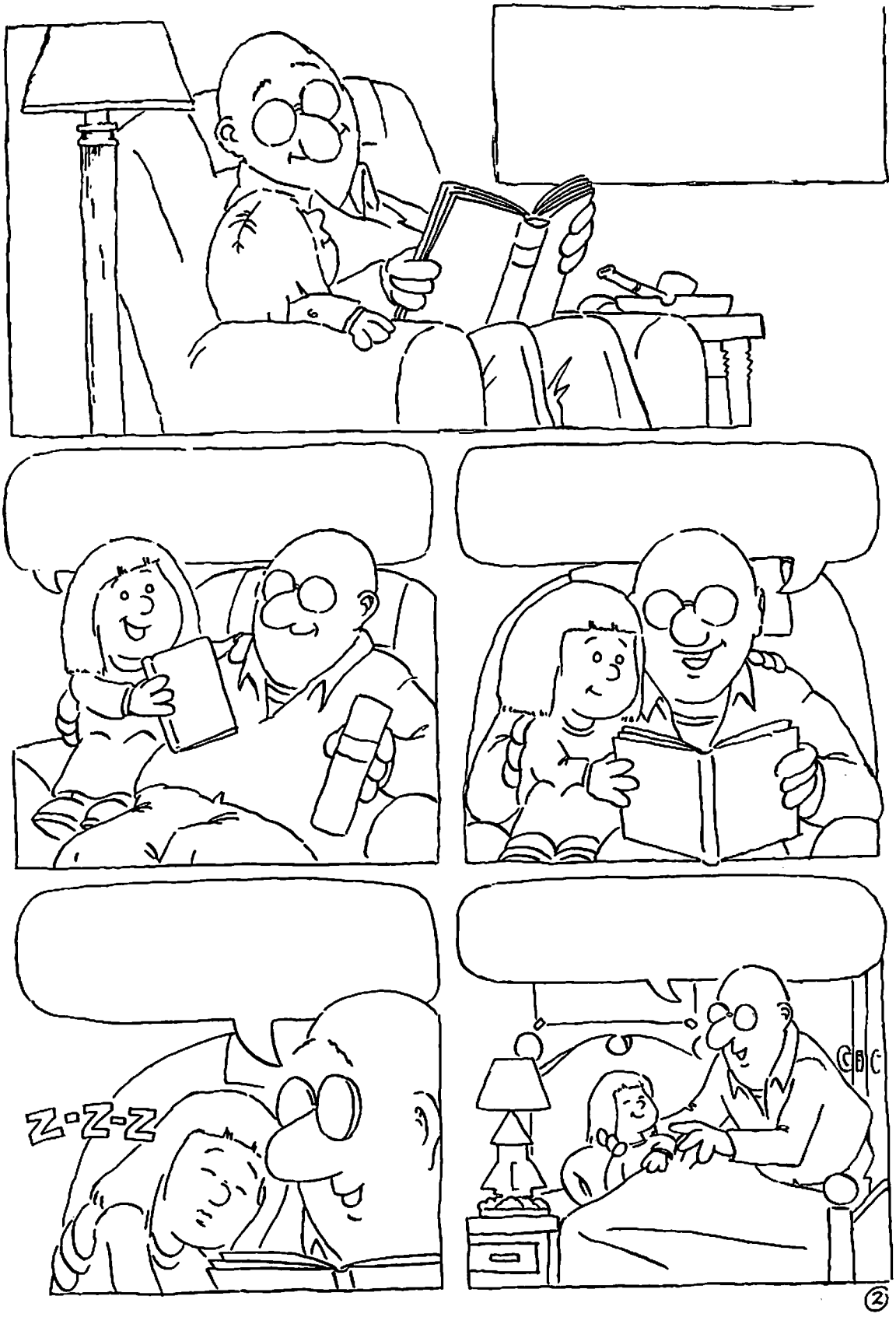
Although this paperback book contains only 24 pages, is large in size (10 x 14 inches) and has no words, The Wordless Book was a favourite of all those who field tested it. There are a variety of story lines presented in this book varying from drawings of a grandfather and a child sharing a book to pictures depicting a science fiction theme. Each of the nineteen 'stories' has a sequence of different graphics going from left to right, like a comic strip. Within each of these panels there is a blank word or thought bubble to be filled in by the student.

This book was initially prepared by the National Literacy Secretariat to be used in tutoring settings. However, we primarily field tested it in classroom settings with excellent results. In one class the finished stories were posted and students were surprised at how varied the stories were. This led to further discussions dealing with content and people's perceptions of situations. In another classroom, students were given a choice of three stories. After selecting a story, they added the dialogue, thoughts or narration in the appropriate balloons. Then students wrote one or two paragraphs based on the dialogue they had initially written, incorporating quotation marks in their writings. The final step in this assignment was to develop their own story using dialogue, character description and narration. During the year-end course evaluation, these exercises were cited by many students as their favourite assignments of the term.

This big book was also used as a tool to help students begin the writing process. The graphics were used to elicit discussion from the students. From this dialogue endless mini lessons on sentence structure, spelling and vocabulary development materialized.

The Wordless Book is highly versatile, can be used at any skill level and lends itself to one-on-one situations as well as classroom settings. The scenes in the book are adult based, and because of the vast array of themes, every students is bound to find topics of interest. Perhaps the final word should be given to one reviewer who stated, "I love it. I would like to re-name it *The Wonderful Wordless Book.*"

Sample Page



original page is 25.5 x 36 cm. (10" x 14")

Title:	Skeleton in the Cupboard
Author:	Iris Howden
Publisher:	The Basic Skills Agency (formerly ALBSU)
Available:	Avanti Books, 8 Parsons Green, Boulton Rd., Stevenage England SG1 4QG, Tel. 011 44 1438 350155 Fax 011 44 1438 741131
Price:	1.60 pounds sterling
ISBN:	1-870741-27-7
Level:	basic
Reviewer:	Joyce Vowles

Skeleton in the Cupboard

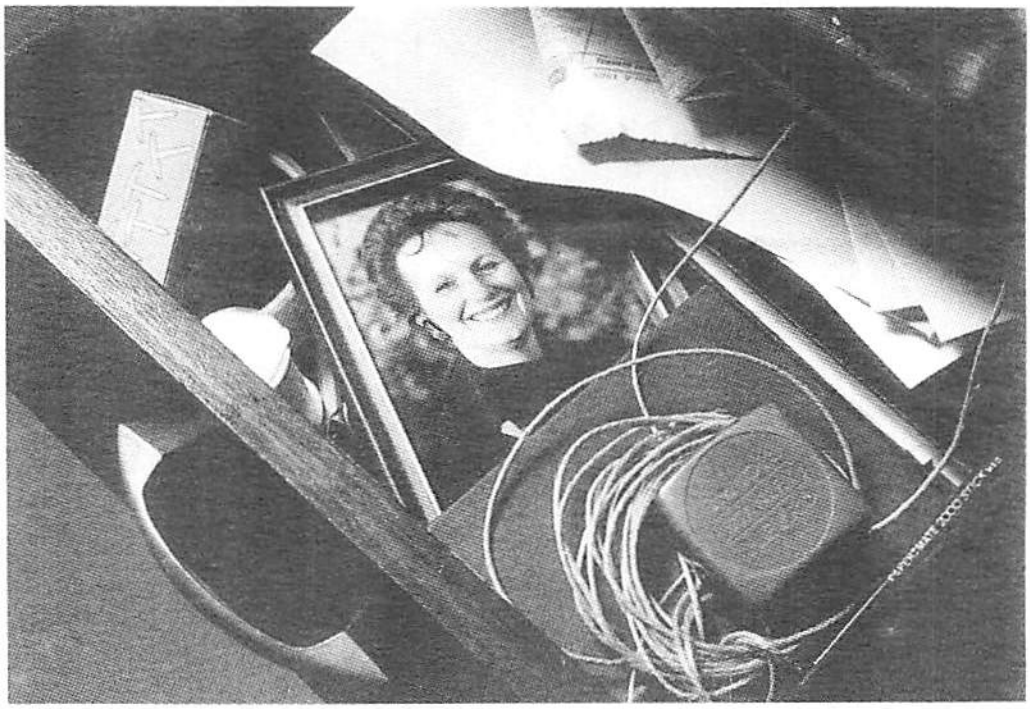
It is always a challenge to find High Interest, Low Vocabulary books suitable for an adult reader. However The Basic Skills Agency has made the search a little easier. Skeleton in the Cupboard is a very basic book, set out in clear, simple language, suitable for beginning readers.

As the title would suggest, Skeleton in the Cupboard is a suspense story. It is written from the perspective of a woman who discovers some things belonging to her husband's first wife which lead her to investigate the circumstances surrounding their breakup.

Each page includes a colour photograph and one or two sentences relating to it. The photographs are of real people acting out the story depicted in the text. The print is large and easy to read, as is the text. The photographs provide good contextual clues if a student is having difficulty with some of the vocabulary.

Students in the Literacy Programme first read Skeleton in the Cupboard as an introduction to books. One man had never handled a book before and this text provided many opportunities to talk about text. We learned about lines that end with periods and those that don't. We learned about context and plot by connecting the pictures to the text. We learned book handling skills by looking for specific features. Because the story is short, it could be reviewed frequently without fatigue.

The students re-read Skeleton in the Cupboard a few weeks before the end of term, and were amazed that it was the same book. They were very proud of their ability to read it fluently or near fluently, and were able to see just how far they had come.



Bill never talked about his first wife.

Series:	STEP into Reading
Titles:	see below
Publisher:	Random House, 1988
Available:	at your local bookstore
	In Vancouver at Kidsbooks (604) 738-5335, fax 738-5362
Price:	$4.50
Level:	basic / functional
Reviewer:	Helen Thomas

STEP into Reading

Step 3 Books:

- Little Sure Shot: The Story of Annie Oakley by Stephanie Spinner
- Tut's Mummy: Lost and Found by Judy Donnelly

Step 4 Books:

- Baseball's Best: Five True Stories by Andrew Gutelle
- Pompeii: Buried Alive! by Edith Kunhardt
- Trojan Horse: How the Greeks Won the War by Emily Little
- True Life Treasure Hunts by Judy Donnelly

Adult learners who have an interest in history, adventure and sports can find material in this series that is interesting and informative. The illustrations and covers are intriguing and attractive. In Baseball's Best, Little Sure Shot and Tut's Mummy there are black and white photographs of the people involved and in Tut's Mummy some photographs of the treasure. The series was designed for children and only some of the titles are appropriate for adults. The titles we field tested and found to be successful with our adult students are listed above. There is "A Note to Parents" on the first page of all books but this can be removed easily.

The STEP into Reading books are written at four steps that approximate grade levels. Instructors and learners found that some of the vocabulary and names were hard to pronounce or too difficult for readers. However, some of these words are broken up into syllables and spelled phonetically in a pronunciation guide at the back of the book and one student commented that this was a "strong asset."

Students were interested in the exciting subject matter, length of the books and the attractive covers. Teachers found these books provide some of the historical background information that so many of our students do not have. One instructor commented, "Pompeii sparked discussions about culture, religion, history and volcanoes, as well as further reading and information gathering about volcanoes." Another instructor liked Little Sure Shot because of ". . . the female heroes and historical figures." Student comments about the books included:
"I learned something new about history."
"I liked the stories about baseball."
"A variety of interesting topics . . . . gives the reader the strength to go on reading."

This series is a wonderful source of books for independent reading and reading with tutors.

From *The Trojan Horse* by Emily Little
Illustrations.© 1988 Michael Eagle

Sample Page

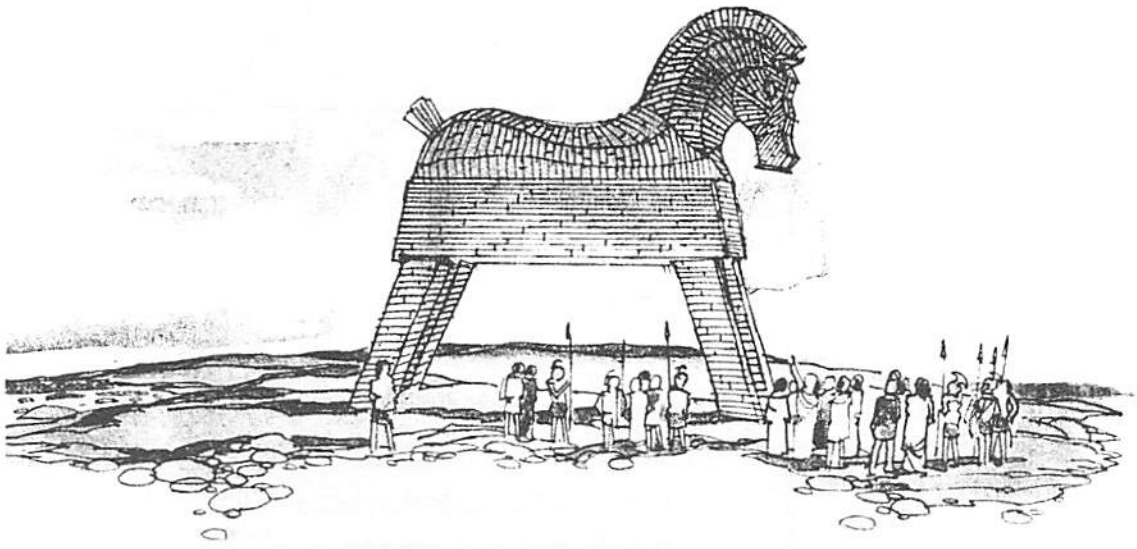
The Greeks are gone!

Soon the great double gate is opened. Soon the people of Troy come crowding out.

The war is over!

The Trojan people walk all the way down to the Greek camp. They want to see the empty huts. They want to see the deserted stable.

The Trojans cannot believe their eyes. There stands a giant wooden horse! What can it be? Why did the Greeks leave it in their camp?



Title:	Sarah, Plain and Tall
Author:	Patricia MacLachlan
Publisher:	HarperCollins
	Copyright ©1985 by Patricia MacLachlan
Available:	your local bookstore
Price:	$5.25
ISBN:	0-06-440205-3
Level:	functional
Reviewer:	Laurie Gould

Sarah, Plain and Tall

"Did Mama sing every day?" Caleb asks his sister Anna. "Every-single-day," Anna answers. "Papa sang, too." But their mother had died many years before and no one sings in their prairie home any longer. One day Papa places an advertisement for a wife in the newspaper and Sarah Wheaton of Maine responds. "Ask her if she sings," says Anna.

Letters go back and forth until Sarah decides to come to the farm for a month. "I will come by train. I will wear a yellow bonnet. I am plain and tall. Tell them I sing." And so begins this gentle, touching story of how these four learn to trust and love one another.

Sarah, Plain and Tall was the 1987 winner of the Newberry medal for the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children. It is a delightful story that your adult students will love. The language is simple, yet poetic. "This writer makes you want to keep reading. Her rich vocabulary brings you into the prairie," commented one student.

Some students decided to read Sarah, Plain and Tall after viewing the television movie of the same name. One wrote,

"The moral of this story is not to dwell on the past and to make the most of the future. Sarah committed herself to making a loving, happy family. I like this story because it had romance, suspense and the story was good. I found this book easy to read and the movie was close to the book. I think anyone who likes a good book or a good movie will like this story."

Another student enjoyed the story so much that she suggested we buy a copy of the sequel, Skylark for our class library.

Sample Page

3

Sarah came in the spring. She came through green grass fields that bloomed with Indian paintbrush, red and orange, and blue-eyed grass.

Papa got up early for the long day's trip to the train and back. He brushed his hair so slick and shiny that Caleb laughed. He wore a clean blue shirt, and a belt instead of suspenders.

The Bulletin's Board

In response to readers' requests we have compiled a list of some publishers and distributors of adult literacy materials to contact for catalogues or ordering materials.

Avanti Books, 8 Parsons Green, Boulton Road, Stevenage, England SG1 4QG phone 01144 1438 350155 fax 01144 1438 741131 distributors for The Basic Skills Agency (formerly ALBSU)

Artel Educational Resources Ltd. 5528 Kingsway, Burnaby BC, V5H 2G2, 435-4949 1-800-665-9255 fax (604) 435-1955 distributers for •Laubach Literacy •Heinemann Guided Readers •Educational Design Inc.•EDL •High Noon

Canada Communication Group Publishing Ottawa ON, K1A 0S9, 1-800-561-4334 fax (819) 994-1498 distributors for many government publications

Copp, Clark Longman Ltd. 2775 Matheson Blvd. East, Mississauga, ON, L4W 4P7 (905) 238-6074 1-800-263-4374 fax (905) 238-6075

Curriculum Associates 5 Esquire Rd. PO Box 2001, N. Billerica, MA, 01862-0901 1-800-225-0248 fax (508) 667-5706

fitzhenry & Whiteside 195 Allstate Parkway, Markham, ON, L3R 4T8 (905) 477-9700 1-800-399-6858 fax (905) 477-9179 distributors for •Contemporary •Jamestown •Lake Education

Laubach Literacy of Canada, 70 Crown St. Suite 225, St. John NB, E2L 2X6, (506) 634-1980, fax (506) 634-0944 distributers for •New Readers Press •People'sPublishing

Learning Disabilities Association of Canada 323 Chapel St., Suite 200 Ottawa ON K1N 7Z2 (613) 238-5721 fax (613) 235-5391

Pippin Publishing 481 University Ave., Toronto ON, M56 2E9 (416) 598-1866 1-800-525-5428 fax (416) 598-1565 distributors for •Cambridge University Press •East End Literacy •Hodder & Stoughton •Steck-Vaughn •University of Michigan Press. Place orders with Canbook Distribution 1220 Nicholson Rd. Newmarket ON, L3Y 7V1, (905) 713-3852 1-800-399-6858 fax 1-800-363-2665

Nelson Canada 1120 Birchmount Rd. Scarborough ON, M1K 5G4 (416) 752-9200 1-800-268-2222 fax (416) 752-8101 distributors for •Heinle & Heinle •Newbury House •South-Western •St. Martin's

Oxford University Press 70 Wynford Dr., Don Mills ON, M3C 1J9 1-800-387-8020

Prentice Hall /Ginn 1870 Birchmount Rd. Scarborough ON, M1P 2J7 1-800-850-5813 To place orders 1-800-567-3800 fax 1-800-263-7733 distributors for •Cambridge Adult Education •Fearon, Janus, Quercus •Globe

Provincial Curriculum Publication Marketing Dept. Open Learning Agency, 4355 Mathissi Place Burnaby, BC V5G 4S8 1-800-663-1653 fax (604) 431-3381

Circulating Materials Mailing List Permanent Collection

The Literacy Materials Bulletin is distributed free to the literacy community of British Columbia and for a yearly fee of $10 to out-of-province subscribers. Materials reviewed in the *Bulletin* are available on loan for one month. Please contact *Literacy B.C.* Suite 622 – 510 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 1L8, Tel. (604)684-0624 1-800-663-1293 toll free in BC or fax 684-8520 if you would like:

- to be added to the *Literacy Materials Bulletin* mailing list
- to order back copies of *Bulletins 1 – 11*
- to drop-in and see the *Literacy Materials Bulletin* permanent collection
- to borrow any of the the materials reviewed in Bulletins 1-12

LITERACY MATERIALS RECOMMENDATION FORM

Title _____

Author _____ **Publisher** _____

Level (please circle) ***Basic (0-3)** ****Functional (4-6)** *****Independent (7-9)**

Why do you recommend this title: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please attach copy of one page and table of contents

Recommended by: _____

_____

_____

LITERACY MATERIALS REQUEST FORM

What kind of material(s) would you like the Literacy Materials Committee to seek out, field test and review. Please include information about the content, level and format (book, video, software, etc.) you require: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Requested by: _____

_____

_____

Send completed forms to:

Literacy Materials Committee
c/o Literacy B.C.
622 – 510 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1L8

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